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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

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To: District and School personnel

From: Madalyn Quinlan, Chief of Staff

Subject: **New Race and ethnicity reporting categories for 2009-2010**

In accordance with new standards issued by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), schools across the nation will need to change how they collect and report race and ethnicity for students and staff. The change will bring education data reporting into line with reporting to the U.S. Census and the rest of the federal government. This change is not optional for the states. The Office of Public Instruction is planning to implement these changes for student level data beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. Changes in racial/ethnic reporting for applicants for Educator Licensure are planned for implementation in January 2009.

The new standards separate race and ethnicity. They include two categories for ethnicity and five categories for race. Each respondent is asked to answer the ethnicity question and also to choose one or more races. (For the purpose of this memo, the term "respondent" is used to refer to the student, the student's parent, or the staff person.)

Data Collection

A two-part question must be used to collect data about a student's or staffperson's race and ethnicity.

Race/Ethnicity Two-Part Question: Sample Format for Enrollment Forms

Answer BOTH questions.

1. Is this student (or Are you) Hispanic or Latino? (*Choose only one*)
 - ☐ No, not Hispanic or Latino
 - ☐ Yes, Hispanic or Latino (A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.)
2. What is the student's (or your) race? (*Regardless of how you answered the first question, choose one or more*)
 - ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America, including Central America, and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.)
 - ☐ Asian (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.)
 - ☐ Black or African American (A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.)
 - ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.)
 - ☐ White (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.)

"It is the mission of the Office of Public Instruction to improve teaching and learning through communication, collaboration, advocacy, and accountability to those we serve."

The order of the questions is important. The ethnicity question must be asked first, and both questions must be answered.

Data Reporting

When data is reported to the U.S Department of Education, the state education agency is required to report aggregated racial and ethnic data in the following seven categories:

- Hispanic/Latino of any race;
- and for individuals who are non-Hispanic/Latino:
- American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White, or
 - Two or more races.

For purposes of Montana's American Indian Achievement Gap payments, a student identified as American Indian will generate the payment regardless of ethnicity or other races. The state may choose to report other information differently from the federal format as well.

No change for the 2008-2009 School Year

For the 2008-2009 school year, the OPI will continue to collect and report racial/ethnic data using the existing six codes:

- 01: American Indian or Alaska Native
- 02: Asian
- 03: Hispanic or Latino
- 04: Black or African American
- 05: White, Non-Hispanic
- 06: Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

For school districts that directly enter data into the AIM system or that are using the District Edition of Infinite Campus product, the district must enter the racial /ethnic data using the existing codes in 2008-2009. These districts will also have the option to enter data using the two-part question. The OPI urges districts not to begin entering data using the two-part question unless the district revises its enrollment forms and asks parents to complete the new form.

OPI to publish guidance for districts

The Office of Public Instruction is in the process of developing guidance for school districts and student information system vendors to use in collecting racial/ethnic data in 2009-2010. The new standards will affect your school or district in several ways.

- (1) Collecting race/ethnicity data. Your school district will need to change your student enrollment forms to use the two-part question.
- (2) Storing data. Your school district will need to make changes to your data base(s) to maintain all of this ethnic/racial information on each student and employee.
- (3) Reporting data. The OPI will provide guidance on how this information is to be reported for USDE purposes. Other agencies may ask for the information in different forms.

- (4) Re-identifying students and staff. Although USDE does not require this, the OPI strongly encourages you to re-identify. Having correct data will affect you in a number of ways, including some funding issues.
- (5) Connecting the new data to the past data. The OPI has a committee working on choosing one of the multiple ways the federal government allows states to "bridge" the data.
- (6) Timing. Although the change will not go into effect until 2010-2011, schools will have to change their enrollment forms and data systems by the 2009-2010 school year to begin collecting the data. An OPI committee will get information to schools as soon as possible about the change and what must be done during the 2008-2009 school year to prepare for it.

We appreciate feedback or questions as we implement this required federal change. OPI will convene a school advisory group to provide input on this significant change. If you have suggestions or questions, contact Rusty Harper at OPI at rharp2@mt.gov or 406-444-3449.